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Extension Service - United States Department of Agriculture

MARITIME EXTENSION

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SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND BASED ON STATE REPORTS

RESULTS SEC 16 1943 ☆

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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High spots of the week's summary: Results of farm labor program; activities in Victory gardening and home food preservation; encouragement of soybean production; income tax schools to help farmers in making their returns; and agricultural conservation program for 1944.

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CONNECTICUT
October 14, 1943

Farm labor.-Potato harvest in Connecticut should be almost completed by October 23. Over 1,000 Jamaicans, some 300 school children, and about 200 factory workers are helping, in addition to local labor. McIntosh apple harvest was completed with no serious labor problem, and none is expected in harvest of later varieties. Most of work can be handled with local labor. Apple growers are well pleased by response of nearly 3,000 people to their appeals for help. Some 180 of 1,100 Jamaicans brought into Connecticut have already left for home. Except for 200 needed for tobacco farm work, remainder can be released when potato harvest is completed. So far weather has been ideal for harvest. No days have been lost because of rain.

From May 15 to September 25, 14,345 workers were placed on farms through Extension emergency farm labor program. Included are 849 year-round workers and 13,496 seasonal employees. Of latter group, 9,071 were boys and girls. About 900 boys and girls were housed in labor camps during summer. Farmers have done some complaining about inefficiency and high cost of emergency help supplied them during year. Nevertheless they realize situation and appreciate work of Extension and county farm labor offices in recruiting labor for them. Whenever possible, workers were trained, and these have developed into some of the best of season. There has been practically no loss of any crop because of lack of labor. Biggest problem continues to be need for full-time workers. Experienced full-time labor is still leaving farms for industrial work.

Victory Gardens.-In June there were estimated to be about 160,000 home gardens in Connecticut this year, considerable increase over usual number. They ranged from about 2 feet square to about 100 feet square, average probably being about 1,500 square feet.

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For most part gardens were well handled. During last World War about 50 percent of home gardens were failures. This time failures were only about 10 percent, as State average, and some localities held figure to as low as 3 percent. This was result of better organization and more information than during last war. Gardeners also followed through this year, not quitting when hot weather arrived. On the whole, garden program for 1943 was very successful and caused considerable increase in home canning and storage for winter.

Income tax schools.-One-day income tax school will be held in each county during October. It will train local consultants who will help their neighborhood farmers make out tax report due December 15, from people who derive 80 percent of income from agriculture. Last year 120 persons attended similar county extension schools. They, in turn, aided an estimated 2,000 farmers throughout State in preparing tax forms. Another 1-day school will be held in February to help farmers with final report due March 15, 1944. Farmer who is helped by consultants pays him nominal fee for his time. Last year fee was based on hourly rate, but this year method of payment will be determined at each county school.

Agricultural conservation for 1944.-It is estimated 50,000 tons of lime and 10,000 tons of superphosphate will be used by Connecticut farmers who participate in 1944 agricultural conservation program. County offices are already taking orders for these materials. Program seeks complete mobilization of State's farm facilities for food production. To prevent permanent injury to farm land as result of imperative need for food during next several years, program provides soil-building measures to enable farmers to maintain full productivity of soil. Particular stress will be placed on practices that will help farmers to produce more and better forage crops to meet acute grain shortage and to maintain soil fertility.

NORTH DAKOTA
October 20, 1943

Farm labor.-Past month marked successful completion of small-grain, flax, potato, and sugar-beet harvests. Workers recruited by extension services in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Mississippi, and also in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and other Corn Belt States, were placed in North Dakota for grain harvest and threshing. For several weeks U. S. Army troops assigned to State worked at harvesting and threshing under local direction of county agents. Almost without exception, harvesting and threshing labor activities were carried on smoothly. Total number of outside workers was nearly 10,000, which, along with unusually heavy work by farmers themselves, was enough to prevent any loss of grain crops from inability to harvest. North Dakota's farm labor organization has functioned satisfactorily in close cooperation with State labor committee representing various agencies, U. S. Employment Service State organization, War Food Administration, and local groups. Volunteers organized and placed under extension direction were important factor.

For potato harvest, brunt of labor needs was carried by local volunteers. Exceptionally fine cooperation was obtained. Some communities practically halted all other operations and went into fields. Schools were closed in all main potato areas, as were also many business places and city offices. Several

hundred Jamaican laborers and Mexican nationals were obtained through War Food Administration for most critical spots. Althouth North Dakota produced one of its largest potato crops this year, no potatoes in main commercial areas were lost for lack of harvest labor.

Sugar beet labor recruited from State sources, with addition of Mexican labor, was enough for harvest. Late corn and hay crops are now being harvested with local labor. North Dakota's critical farm labor situation is definitely solved for present year.

Home food supply.—Extension work in food production, preservation, and use has been continued into fall as a principal activity. Every effort has been made to encourage fullest possible conservation and use of garden and other home food supplies. Preservation methods have been taught at public meetings held in most communities by Extension and cooperating agencies. Homemakers' clubs have given special attention to food preservation; as have 4-H Clubs. Recently, attention has been given to home storing of larger supolies of potatoes. Greater use on farm of skim-milk supplies is being emphasized, since North Dakota is a butterfat-producing State. Leaflet on making cottage cheese at home has been prepared for general distribution.

More efficient use of pressure cookers for canning is being urged, including cooperation among families in sharing cookers and care in handling them.

Fire control.—Faced with tremendous vegetative growth this year, wide areas of State have an increased grass-fire hazard. For several weeks Extension has conducted publicity and educational campaign to guard farms and buildings. Several pamphlets on preventing and fighting fires have been released.

Poultry.—Turkey growers have been provided with information on feeding and marketing to meet Government requirements for armed forces. Poultry improvement work has been continued, special attention being given to rigid culling of flocks this fall, both to increase production with less feed, and to control disease, particularly avian tuberculosis. Processing plants are being helped in meeting current shortage of poultry pickers--a marketing bottleneck.

Livestock feed.—Although handicapped by insufficient labor, farmers are being advised to save largest possible supplies of feed this fall. Late hay crops are being cut and stored and, with favorable weather, feed supplies will be greatly enlarged. Silage has been recommended for corn caught by early frost.

Improved oats.—Work has been started to improve oat varieties in 12 counties where crop is particularly susceptible to rust. Three approved varieties are emphasized. Farmers are urged to save oats of these varieties for seed instead of marketing them.

PUERTO RICO
October 1, 1943

Nutrition.—Agricultural and home demonstration agents have organized nutrition committees as result of nutrition workshops. Nutrition training meetings were held with 4-H leaders and adults in several districts. Numerous demonstrations were given in proper preparation of soybeans. During month, home demonstration agents helped 25 families in obtaining pressure cookers.

Food production.—Campaign for increased production continues, with emphasis on raising more nourishing food such as soybeans, yellow sweetpotatoes, and vegetables. In 1 of the 4 zones, 58 meetings were attended by 1,576 farmers. Soybeans and sweetpotatoes will be given special attention at demonstration and test farms.

Extension conference.—Annual conference of extension workers was held at end of September. Procedure was changed this year by inclusion of panel discussions. Results were very satisfactory in encouraging cooperation among extension workers and coordination of their activities.

4-H Clubs.—Land Authority of Puerto Rico furnished one 4-H Club with about 12 acres, which are under preparation and will be planted in near future. The Authority furnished smaller plots in other places and will continue to do so.

Miscellaneous activities.—Other activities carried on have included debt readjustment meetings; helping farmers to fill out applications for fertilizer and for credit; work with neighborhood leaders; organization of 4-H model clubs; planning of achievement days; introduction of purebred sires in coffee zone; and cooperation with Federal and Insular agencies in emergency planting program.